Government. The Government of India has already appointed the VI Central pay Commission (CPC) to review the structure of pay, allowances and other benefits to the Central Government employees including Armed Forces. The three Services have since submitted a joint memorandum to the Pay Commission regarding service conditions and enhancement of pay and allowances.

Under capacity functioning of Indian Military Academy

655. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in its platinum jubilee year, the Indian Military Academy (IMA), the Army's premier officer training institute is functioning at just over one third of its capacity;

(b) whether it is a fact that there has been a downward trend in the quality of candidates applying for permanent commission over the past decade and it is feared that this dangerous trend can seriously undermine the Army's operational abilities; and

(c) if so, the steps the Government proposes to take to prevent further deterioration?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The standards of selection of officers' category by the Services Selection Boards have not been diluted.

Training to CPOs and State police forces by Indian Army

656. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Army has been asked to provide training to the Central Police Organizations (CPOs) and State Police forces to tackle Naxal menace;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government would like to deploy Army in the most sensitive areas which are affected by Naxals; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) The Army within the framework of the Government's counter Naxal Strategy is extending training and advice to Central Police Organisations (CPOs)/State police forces in Naxal affected States. 139 companies of State police forces/CPOs have been trained so far.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal to deploy Army in the Naxal affected areas.

Strategic shift in Defence deals

657. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during the last four years, there was a strategic shift in terms of defence deals by Government of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that due to this shift we are moving to the new suppliers from traditional suppliers; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) Government constantly review the security environment and accordingly decide to induct appropriate equipment for adequate defence preparedness. Procurement of the equipment is made by the Government from various indigenous as well as foreign sources to meet the requirements of the Armed Forces.

Procurement proposals are progressed in accordance with the Defence Procurement Procedure.

Divulging further details in this regard will not be in the national interest.

Crashes of IAF aircrafts

658. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian Air Force aircrafts that crashed or met with serious accidents during 2007, with the class of aircraft that crashed and were lost to the Air Force;

(b) the number of Air Force personnel who lost their lives and the extent of loss of civilian lives and property caused due to the mishaps during the year 2007; and

(c) in event of the aircraft crashing in civil areas, the compensation paid by Defence for such losses and the basis therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) A total of ten (10) Indian Air Forces's aircraft crashed during the calendar year 2007. In these accidents, three (3) Kiran, two (2) Jaguar, two (2) MiG-21, one (1) Mirage-2000, one (1) MiG-29 and one (1) Advance Light Helicopter were lost.

(b) Seven Pilots were killed in these accidents. There was no civilian casualty. However, there was loss to civil property worth Rs. 41,700/- in the accident which took place on 24.1.2007.

(c) A compensation of Rs. 41,700/- was paid in case of loss of the civil property in the accident which took place on 24.1.2007. Payment is made on the basis of loss assessment report by the local Revenue Officials duly countersigned by District Magistrate/Deputy Commissioner/Collector of the district.

Shortage of officers in the Army

659. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a shortage of officers in the 1.13 million strong Army in our country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government is not managing to attract enough bright youngsters for its officer cadre;

(c) if so, the details thereof;